



TOWN OF HANOVER
550 HANOVER STREET
HANOVER, MASSACHUSETTS 02339

Advisory Committee

Hanover Advisory Committee
550 Hanover Street
Hanover, MA 02339
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, March 2, 2022 – 6:00 PM
In Person & Virtual Meeting

Committee Attendees

Emmanuel Dockter	Steve Freedman
Sandy Hayes	Jim Hoyes
Joan Port-Farwell	Greg Satterwhite
Gavin Little-Gill	

Residents At Large

Mike Cianciola	Doug MacLellan
----------------	----------------

Committee Absent

Gerry O'Hearn

Other Attendees

Joe Colangelo, Town Mgr.	Chelsea Stevens, Finance Dir.
Virginia Johnson, Library Dir	Victor Diniak, Dir. of Public Works
Kurt Kelley, Supt. Public Works (Field Operations)	

Chairman Dockter called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. There were 7 members present.

There were no public comments.

Chairman Dockter let the committee know that member Steve Kmito notified him that unfortunately he isn't going to be able stay on AdComm. His schedule has gotten really tight and having a tough time keeping up. Emmanuel recognizes that there is nothing on the agenda for this meeting about he is willing to put this on a future agenda. While in this discussion, Emmanuel wanted everyone to know that there are 3 terms that will be running out this year, Greg, Jerry and Gavin. Gavin Little-Gill wanting to be fully transparent and asked to be recognized. He will likely be ending his term this year. After six years, it is time to let other people be able to be on the committee. Emmanuel shared that when an opening happens in the middle of the term AdComm can fill the position until July 15th and then the moderator fills the position. Emmanuel wanted to talk to the moderator because he doesn't know if it makes sense to fill the position or not before July 15th. Our work ends at town meeting. We would be looking at an appointment for a month or two. We have two people who have been joining us and have been putting in a lot of work. I've been very impressed with Mike and Doug. One of my

concerns is that if both Mike and Doug are interested in being on the committee, which I assume you both are since you're both here; I'm a little bit uncomfortable with the committee having to vote one person between those two. The benefit of the moderator having to make the choice is it doesn't affect the working relationships of the committee. I have been thinking about this just today and if individual members have thoughts you can reach out to me, and we can see how to handle this. It might be an option to not fill the position and then have the moderator address the issue. It looks like there are two openings, and there might actually be as many as four or five openings. Emmanuel asked if anyone has any questions on this matter; please get in touch with him.

Review of minutes was tabled until the 3/9/22 meeting.

Chair Dockter suggested starting with Library since he expected that it would be a lot quicker than DPW. Virginia (Ginny) Johnson, Library Director thanked the committee for inviting her to talk about the library budget.

Ginny had the committee look at the overall budget sheet first because there is some context she will reference in her presentation. The cuts that the library was asked to make earlier in the year are all on the materials side. The cuts have all been made are on the expense side not salary. My presentation will share why we chose to do that. By way of explanation – I prepared this for the Select Board back in January. It talks about what happened when COVID hit. Ginny shared they provided curbside pickup and home delivery while they were closed. Both of those are continuing. We have a half a dozen people who have chosen to continue home delivery, which is wonderful. Virtual programming again continues indefinitely. We've expanded our electronic and downloadable services. Those will continue and are available from home and we will continue to expand those. Phone, email and online assistance with materials and reference questions will also continue.

Ginny provided background starting with the library closing on March 13, 2020. Our staff was furloughed as of April 22, 2020. One of our full-time staff members opted to retire rather than accept the furlough. The frozen position resulted in a 12.5% budget cut from FY20 to FY21. Hanover was second highest of the only 4 municipalities in the state with a greater and 10% budget cut. This 12.5% cut required us to request a waiver from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) in order to retain our certification. They are the governing body in a way similar to how schools get accredited, libraries get certification. We are currently in a provisional mode of certification right now. Certified libraries receive state aid to public libraries is an annual, voluntary program administered by the MBLC that distributes local aid to municipalities. We receive approximately \$20,000 annually. Certified Libraries also take part in reciprocal borrowing (Interlibrary loan). Which is what happens when you place a hold on materials from another library. That's what reciprocal borrowing is. We must meet our Municipal Appropriation Requirement; meet the Minimum Standards of Free Public Library Service; and submit annual reports and forms to show compliance. State Aid funding is appropriated annually to the MBLC by the state legislature.

The Appropriation Requirement – Municipalities must appropriate a figure of at least the average of the last 3 years' municipal appropriations to the library for operations, increased by 2.5% in order to be certified for State Aid to Public libraries. This calculated figure is known as the Municipal Appropriation Requirement (MAR). A municipality must meet the MRA or apply for and receive a waiver of said MRA in order to be eligible to be certified for State Aid to Public Libraries by the MBLC. Capital appropriations cannot be used to meet the MAR.

How to Calculate the MAR – The MAR is calculated using the prior 3 years’ municipal appropriations for operating expenses or the MAR figures, whichever is higher. The average of the 3 years’ figure is increased by 2.5% to determine the MAR figure for the current fiscal year.

Question – The formula is based on you having on average of a 2.5% increase over 3-years? Yes, the state obviously knew with COVID there would be some adjustments and there were some modifications, but this formula is in statue and there is nothing they can do about this without changing the law.

Question – Is the formula the appropriated amount or expenses for the 3 years? It is appropriated amounts.

Questions – It is just the last 3 years. So, if you have a year where you have a cut you could get certified if you are over the next 2 years you have 2.5% increase and you don’t have to go back to the previous baseline. That is correct! The part-time position brought us to a 7.5% cut from previous years with this upcoming budget we will be back to the level we should be at. A 3.4% increase over FY22. We are showing the state we are getting back to that service level. The state wants to see forward growth. This was specifically caused by the lack of a position that was frozen, we’ve restored ½ of a position and we are on our way back to restoring it back to full-time. My initial reaction to the overall request to cut was to ask Joe that I will cut material before I cut people. You’ll see that I was able to make the \$22,000 cut that was requested in expenses which is materials. The reasoning for that is that goes back to the expenses question. The MBLC doesn’t care where the money we expend comes from. They want 16% of that total budget spent on materials but that material can be purchased by donations, the friends, they can be purchased through the budget, or gifts. The biggest cuts are in periodicals and journals and in reference. It’s because the majority of those have gone online. So, if you look at the lines I have increased a little or at the same level its things like electronic databases and books.

Why is Certification so Important?

1. Noncertified municipalities and its library will not receive any State Aid to Public Libraries monies. Currently, we receive approximately \$10,000 annually in State Aid. It helps pay for museum passes and programming
2. Libraries in certified municipalities are not required to lend library materials to the library in the noncertified municipality. We are not able to lend or send!
3. Libraries is certified municipalities are not required to extend reciprocal library services, beyond in-library use of their materials, to residents of the noncertified municipality.
4. The library will not receive support through the Small Libraries in Networks Program. *Rural libraries.*
5. The municipality is not eligible to apply for funds under the Public Library Construction Program, and any existing grant will be invalidated because the library must maintain eligibility throughout the construction process in order to receive grand funds. *Rural libraries. This doesn’t apply to our town.*
6. The library will be eligible to apply for grants under the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) program. As of yet, Hanover has not applied for LSTA grants.

It is over a period of 5 years that these could happen.

Question – Is there any reason why we have not applied for these grants? They grants are very specific for what they can be used for. I.e. adding a 3D printer, we don't have the space for a 3-D printer. There are very specific directions.

Ginny's hoped her whole presentation was defending the fact that she made the cuts in expenses and not personnel.

Question – Can you talk about the stipend line a minute? When we first started the softright program with Victor there was an issue with combining longevity and the tech stipend. That is the total of both of those. I have a whole spreadsheet that I could share with you. There is \$8000 in technology stipend and a little bit more in longevity.

Question – On personnel, can you review the sub-total lines? We were missing a staff person. We went from a full-time position minus a part-time position in step 1, and we are trying to get that full-time position back in place. The way I figured that out was to take my highest seniority part-time person and figure out what it would cost to bring that person up to full time. **2nd Question** – The FY22 budgeted number of \$427,612 vs the FY21 expended number of \$357,926.80 is for the unfilled position? Chelsea shared that the FY21 number also doesn't include the furloughed numbers for July and August of FY21 these were not budgeted for because we knew that staff would be furloughed until the end of the summer.

One position is at about 50% of what it should be. FY22 is adding in a full year of the staff and adding the part-time position. FY23 is adding part-time to full-time.

Question – In terms of the 2.5% I am assuming FY21 budget was probably lower than the \$600,000 we budgeted for FY22. In terms of hitting the 2.5% I think we are in pretty good shape overall? We are showing steady growth. **Question 2** – We aren't at issue with the FY23 budget? I don't believe so. It seems like we have more than enough? I think we are on the right track. We have to do our due diligence in filling out forms for the state to show that growth, but I believe we are on the right track.

Question – I understand the numbers and the explanation, but I am struggling with the FTE's overall, do you have a chart or some representation to show where the movement is as we go from full-time positions to part-time and bringing them back? Salaries-Appointed Officials is myself and 2 non-union librarians and our page. The Salaries Clerical has 2 full-time union member's; Salaries Permanent Part-time has 4; Temporary Employees we have a cadre of a ½ dozen subs that fill-in. I keep that line item the same year to year because we never know when we're going to need bodies in the building. We have 6 full-time equivalents.

Ginny shared what would happen if we lost our certification:

- Hanover Library Card - Hanover library materials only
 - Our circulation for FY21 was 72,417; of that, 34,369 were to and from other libraries. Almost ½ of our circulation.
 - Hanover's population according to the 2020 census is 14,570. There are 5,302 active library card holders – more than 1/3 of the Town. That would be a big impact if non-certification happened.

We are trying to get the part-timer back to full-time and unfortunately, we cannot use State Aid funds to defray the cost of the position. We can use State Aid for; i.e. Materials or staffing for a specific purpose.

State Aid to Public Libraries awards are funds not able to be appropriated by the municipality, are solely for library expenditures and are subtracted from the municipalities' gross appropriations to help determine the local property tax levy, these awards cannot be used by the municipality as a revenue source to meet the Municipal Appropriation Requirement.

There were no additional questions. Ginny asked if there were any more questions.

Chairman Dockter thanked Ginny for her presentation.

Chairman Dockter welcomed Victor Diniak, Director of DPW and Kurt Kelley, Superintendent of DPW Field Operations.

Victor began sharing the DPW Proposed Budget. He reviewed his General Fund Budget sharing the areas of responsibility and shared his major goals within the budget.

Field Operations – Traditional DPW

Victor is trying to maintain current staffing levels. They are fully funding contractual obligations. Prior year budget was based on unknown numbers. We are now basing our budget on known numbers. The number looks like 4.89%, but we have step and service awards, also.

Question – Do you know what that percent is just for this year? The problem we are developing the budget in the fall. I can get you that number after the meeting.

Question – We have seen this in almost every budget. Are we having issues this year? Chelsea thinks everything seems OK. I don't see any major issues. If we had to we could do a municipal fund transfer. I don't see any reason for any more funding. I think the overall budget should be fine. Funding is for a part-time gardener.

Funding seasonal laborers has been a problem and Victor has had to bump up the hourly rate. . \$17.50 to \$20.00 per hour.

Expense side – Reduction of 2.2%. Victor has concerns about supply chain issues. We are being very careful.

Question – What is triggering brush grinding? He will talk about that later on.

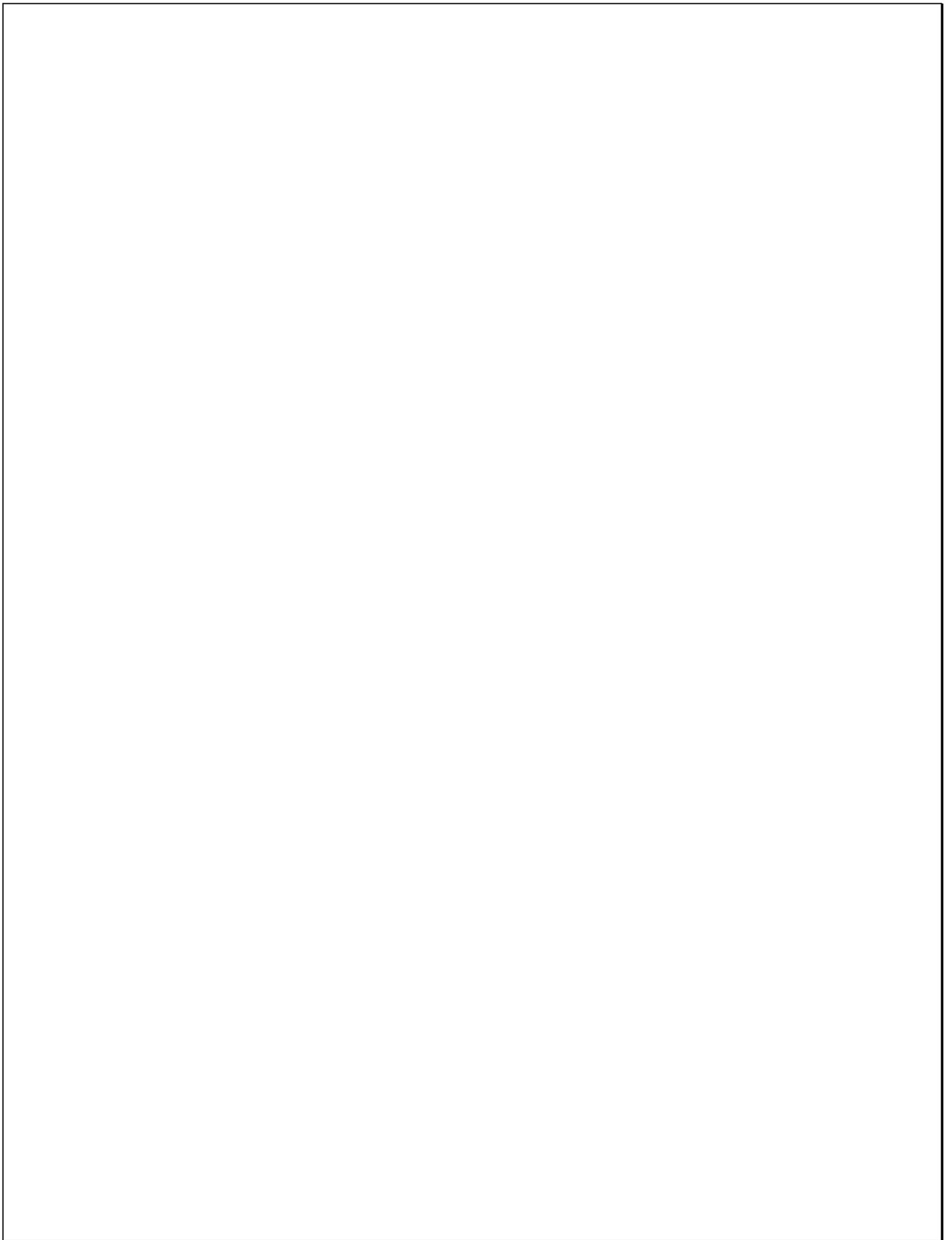
Overall budget up 0.76%.

Changes for FY 23 – Street Lights – adding \$5,000 for outsource repairs, \$1,000 for electricity.

Question – What causes a pole to go down? Most of the time it is because someone has hit a pole. The power company replaces the pole they don't put the street light back up. Kurt waits to make it worth our while to bring the company in. There are only a few companies that work on lights.

Significant changes to Public Grounds, Transfer Station and Fuel Pump budgets.

Public Grounds – the reason for the gardener is that our guys are not gardeners. We need someone for the fine detail in selecting plants, dead heading plants, i.e. We need someone who really knows what they are doing. That is what we are looking for. This is not a year round position.



Question – Are we going to hire or contract? Looking to hire gardeners. Are we looking at asking the garden clubs if they know anyone? Victor is hoping that word of mouth will help us.

Shifted portable bathroom costs at Myrtle, Gallant, and Ellis to the Park and Recreation revolving account.

Increased the tree program.

Question – Norwell has a pretty robust tree program, have you thought about partnering up with them. We do lean on both Norwell and Pembroke. Take downs are a much bigger project and Norwell & Pembroke don't do the take downs. We could spend as much money as you can give us.

Question – have we been following up with the power company to make sure they are meeting their requirements? Is there anything we can do? They are pretty robust in Hanover. Power companies have gone global. They will definitely deal with large pine trees. They have a limited budget, too.

Question - What is the policy as far as trees coming down and debris that is just back from the road? Do we pick those up? Basically no, we don't have the capacity to do. Residents have access to the brush pile, Landscapers cannot. There is no pick-up. We are very firm about that. We have just enough people.

Transfer Station – Had to up numbers for higher wages to attract and keep personnel. We are going to be going out to bid for our general recyclables. Markets have rebounded. There aren't a lot of vendors. Our vendor has been bought out. Victor is going out to bid to test the market. We have adjusted our waste estimates across the board. The gate attendants are working.

Question – As you increase the number of tonnage are we more profitable? If less people bring C&D how does that affect us? Right now we are going to be profitable. 100,000 aren't going to get us very far.

Question – For C&D only, do we have the revenue and expense for FY22 what is additional revenue for FY23. We are going to see a fluctuation over the next couple of years. The gap between revenue and expenses is less in FY23 vs FY22. Next year we will have a better picture of expenses and revenue.

Questions – The volume that we have budgeted for in FY22 and expected is down and that will result in being short. Chelsea shared it will be neutral.

Margins in waste and haul estimates are very tight and if the tonnages of hauls exceed estimates, a supplemental appropriation may be needed in the spring of 2023.

Question – Where are we with recycling compared to other towns. We are comparable. If you look at tonnage. We compare! They are starting to have mills for recycling. The market is very dynamic. Our recyclables are fairly clean.

Question – Donation area? – Is very busy! Swap shop is closed as are others in the surrounding area.

Energy – Market is volatile. Things are going to change. Natural gas and electricity costs are somewhat locked in due to commodity contracts. Fuel prices have skyrocketed in FY22. Victor is super concerned. This is problem that we have to think about. We have an energy broker who locked us in until 2025. We are going to see this in everything we buy. We don't have a lot of options for our vehicle fuel options. Joe came into the conversation to share this was the last budget line that they lowered knowing it was a risk. We are cutting it close at best! Every spring we look at budgets. In January, I project everything. We are going to have to be real careful.

Facilities

The story with facilities is COVID. Each building is a program. Overall budget is up 5.18%

Labor – maintain current staffing levels. Still supports COVID related support for lunch operations.

Question - Can we use ARPA? We can use ARPA for other things, but probably not labor. If there are ways we can use ARPA we will.

Question – ARPA is not just an endless bucket? Joe and Chelsea shared \$4.3 million. That we have until 12/31/24.

Expenses up 3.03%

Air Quality and air flow monitoring.

We continue to have one-time expenses in the schools in responses to COVID.

We need to continue to make investments in our buildings.

Question – Can you discuss how decisions are made on the facilities budget? Who is setting policy on projects for schools? The Town Manager set the policy. The schools are the primary client for facilities and facilities told them they would not let them down when the transition happened from reporting to the schools to reporting to Victor as department head and ultimately the Town Manager.

Chairman Dockter was making sure that everyone on the committee understood the process and who are the policy makers. It would be good for us to understand what the school facility policy is.

Water

Labor – not looking for large increases. We don't know how long the new media will last for the new system. Victor doesn't know how long it will last. We have increase testing.

Tank mixers are constantly running 24 hours a day.

In figures the water budget we know the gallons that are going to flow, how much chemical we will use, we know the maintenance history and price of chemicals. Victor doesn't know if energy costs are going to impact the budget making costs go up.

PFAS is only at Pond St. We test the other plants. Other towns have the same kind of problems. There was a discussion on PFAS for better understanding of the process. One filter costs \$40,000. Victor doesn't know how long the filter is going to last.

Question – When are we going to have a better idea often we will have to change these filters will need to be changed? It all depends on how high are levels are and how well the chemicals adhere to the media. We think we have dodged a bullet for having to build an additional onto Pond St.

We are taking away a .5 of a clerical position in the Water Department

Question – Where are we with our water management act? We are low right now. We were up at 20-25% and we are below 10%. The reason is the water leaks were going undetected. We have been very aggressive with detection. We have also discovered that service leaks utilize an enormous amount of water.

Emmanuel asked Victor if there anything else.

Victor shared that we will be seeing an increase in water usage and service charges as Hanover Crossing opens up.

Question – Have we figured out the generators? We have backed off. We have an electrical engineering going to size up the buildings. We are going to take a different look. We will have the truth about all the buildings. We are trying to get more educated on each building instead of guessing.

Our next meeting will be next Wednesday, March 9 at 6 PM. The presentation will be Transfer Station Review Committee, Bylaw Review Committee and Town Clerk. Emmanuel also brought up the filling of the open position; he wants anyone to reach out to him if they have ideas

A motion was made to adjourn. The motion was seconded. The motion passed unanimously by roll-call vote

The meeting adjourned at 8:06 pm.